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**HE PUTIPUTI, HE TAONGA, HE RANGATIRA  
THE FACTORS MOTIVATING YOUNG MĀORI  
WOMEN TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of the factors that motivate young Māori women to achieve success. Six Māori women aged between fifteen and twenty six years were interviewed for the purpose of identifying what motivates them and to explore their perceptions of motivation, achievement and success. All of the young women have achieved across many facets within their lives but were chosen for this study because of their high achievements in sport, education and business. Jodi Te Huna, Kayla Sharland, Hinurewa Poutu, Amanda Gimblett, Christall Raukawa Lowe and Te Kaihou Ngarotata are the voices within this research. Their experiences, perceptions and ideas about motivation and achieving success are presented as case studies.

Informed by a Māori worldview, Māori research methodologies are blended together and are the foundation of this research. Grounded theory and Feminist approaches to research were also utilised alongside Māori methodologies which provide the researcher with the path to navigate the research process. The six Māori women who participated in this study are the heart of this research and through their voices they offer knowledge enabling the researcher to walk the path.

The research found that a supportive environment is essential in motivating people. Whānau were identified as the primary external motivating factor which reflected a wide range of support systems. Using social learning theories to explain the internal intricacies of why we behave in a motivated way, the study found that the participants within this research were driven by intrinsic factors and instilled values which influenced them to behave in a motivated way. Self efficacy was also a factor motivating them to achieve their successes. The study also found a clear connection between external and internal motivating factors. Specifically, external motivating factors cultivate internal motivating factors.

This study has been undertaken by a Māori woman, for and on behalf of Māori women. It contributes to the growing voice that Māori women are carving out in research and provides evidence that Māori women do achieve, can achieve and will continue to achieve.

## HE MIHI

Ko Huiarau te maunga

Ko Ruatahuna te awa

Ko Otekura te marae

Ko Kakahutapiki te hapū

Ko Tuhoe te iwi

Ko Mataatua te waka

He rere tonu ngā mihi ki te Atua mō te wairua i arahi mai i ā au. Ka huri ōku whakaaro ki a ratou ōku tipuna kua riro i te pō. Nā te kaha o ratou mātou tonu i kawē. He nui ngā haepapa mō ngā wahine katoa i a ratou e atawhai ana i te whānau. Heoi ano, ma te mahi a ngā wahine ka whai angitu a tātou tamariki.

To the six Māori women who were at the heart of this research. Christall, Te Kaihou, Amanda, Hinurewa, Kayla and Jodi – your voices have inspired. I thank you all for your contribution.

Apanui Toke Watene my husband and best friend, thank you for caring for our family so that this study could find completion. I look forward to an eternity together.

Rachael Selby, my constant kaitiaki and friend. Your nurturing hand has blessed me in so many ways. Farah Rangikoea Palmer, your mauri and mātauranga lives between the voices of the young women presented in this study. Rachael and Farah, for me you both epitomise successful Māori women. I respect you, I thank you and I acknowledge you both in this work.

My peers and colleagues, so many names and faces who have added their mauri to this work - I thank each of you. In particular, April Bennett, my dear friend, your constant listening ear and input has helped to form this work.

My whānau, each of us must reach our potential. I hope that you will be inspired by the voices of the young women in this study and start being the success that you can be.

Ngā mihi aroha ki a koutou.

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## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

*Kei roto i a koe, tou ake mana*

*Within each of us lies the seed of potential*

The above whakatauki<sup>1</sup> makes a statement about the capability imbedded in each individual. This study unpacks this assumption by investigating what motivates young Māori women to achieve. In particular it explores the motivating factors of six young Māori women who are high achievers across sport, education and business, and who are perceived as successful by their whānau and communities. I am an insider within this research, positioned not only as the researcher but also as a Māori woman seeking my own achievements and successes in life. In this sense, while the study reveals the stories of only six young Māori women, it opens a window for others to connect, learn from, feel inspired and rejoice in the knowing of our potential. The research topic was shaped mainly by my own interests as a Māori woman and also by my professional background which included working with youth and Māori in the health sector. As an educator I was determined to approach the task from an optimistic point of view and therefore focussed on the strengths and capabilities of motivated and successful young Māori women. The research was primarily undertaken due to commitments related to being employed as an academic within a University environment. However, the research is not solely about fulfilling an academic achievement, it is about six voices telling their personal stories about how they view themselves and their achievements. Therefore, this research may interest those who wish to understand how others achieve, including researchers and academics but also parents and young people.

While Māori women's voices are becoming more evident within research, there continues to be an absence of Māori women's voices focussing on the strength and positive aspects of Māori women and our development. This research provides a space for Māori women to have their strengths and achievements recorded and shared, thus building upon the existing literature related to Māori women's achievements. It also provides another avenue for acknowledging the achievements of the six young women participating within this research.

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<sup>1</sup> See Glossary for an explanation of Māori words and phrases.

The overall aim of the research is to identify the motivating factors that have assisted the young Māori women to achieve success. This includes identifying their definitions of motivation, achievement and success. The research examines the following questions:

1. How do young Māori women define motivation?
2. How do young Māori women define success and being successful?
3. What are the factors motivating young Māori women to achieve success?
4. What is available in the literature related to young Māori women, motivation and achievement/success? Are there definitions of what these terms mean for Māori women?

The research is presented in the following format:

Chapter two reviews the literature relevant to the overall research aim and questions. It discusses traditional perceptions of Māori women achievers and contemporary writings about Māori women and achievement which have predominantly emerged within the area of education. Literature linking Māori and motivation and Māori youth development strategies are also presented within this chapter.

Chapter three presents the methodology. It reveals the theoretical underpinnings that inform this research which provide justification for the choice of approaches used. It also presents my story as the researcher delving into the research process, starting with an idea and ending with knowledge.

Chapter four offers the voices of the six young Māori women who are the focus of this research. Their perceptions, experiences and ideas about motivation and achieving success are presented as case studies.

Chapter five weaves together the research by providing a discussion and interpretation of the overall findings. An analysis of the case study data and how it relates to the literature presented in chapter two is provided. Concepts and theories about how young Māori women are motivated to achieve are explored.

Chapter six provides the concluding statements, revisiting the research questions, findings, limitations and recommendations for future research.